

Message Text

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ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-10 NSCE-00 SSO-00

INRE-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 AID-10 IGA-02 L-02 EB-03

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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7351

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY

SECDEF WASHDC

S E C R E T ADDIS ABABA 0828

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS

SUBJECT: SECURITY ASSISTANCE: ETHIOPIAN FMS PROGRAM

SECDEF FOR ISA

REF: ADDIS ABABA 0714

1. EMBASSY/MAAG OFFER FOLLOWING COMMENTS FOR CONSIDERATION IN CONNECTION THREE-YEAR FMS CREDIT PROGRAM PROPOSAL FOCUSED ON ARMOR WHICH WE UNDERSTAND BEING CONSIDERED FOR INCLUSION IN PRESIDENTIAL LETTER TO EMPEROR.

2. WE BELIEVE THAT MULTI-YEAR FMS CREDIT OFFER TO ETHIOPIA WOULD BE WELCOMED BY IEG AS A TANGIBLE, REASSURING SIGN OF CONTINUING AMERICAN INTEREST IN ETHIOPIA'S SECURITY, PROVIDED TERMS WERE NOT PROHIBITIVE IN EMPIRE'S CURRENT ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES AND COULD BE SPECIFIED. HOWEVER, EVEN THOUGH GREAT DISPARITY IN ARMOR INVENTORIES BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND

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SOMALIA DEEPLY PREOCCUPIES IEG AND PROCUREMENT OF ADDITIONAL

ARMOR IS CONSEQUENTLY HIGH ON LIST ETHIOPIAN DEFENSE PRIORITIES, WE SEE PROBLEMS IN TYING ANY SUCH THREE-YEAR FMS CREDIT OFFER TO ARMOR.

3. INCEPTION ETHIOPIAN FMS CREDIT IS LIKELY INCREASE IEG'S DESIRE PARTICIPATE MORE FULLY IN DETERMINATION PROGRAM CONTENT, SINCE CREDITS MUST EVENTUALLY BE REPAYED. THIS SUGGESTS NEED FOR AVOIDING IMPRESSION THAT USG WISHES UNILATERALLY DETERMINE CONTENT OF PROGRAM. EXCLUSIVE FOCUS ON ARMOR, MOREOVER, LIKELY BE CONSTRUED BY IEMF AS UNILATERAL VOIDING BY U.S. OF RESULTS ACHIEVED IN CONSULTATIONS SINCE LAST SUMMER OF JOINT US/IEG PRIORITIES COMMITTEE, AND AS INDICATION THAT THAT WHOLE EXERCISE WAS A FARCE. DURING PRIORITY COMMITTEE DETERMINATIONS, US AIDE WAS CONSISTENTLY ABLE OBTAIN ACCEPTANCE OF ITS JUDGMENT CONCERNING THE RELATIVE PRIORITY OF IEMF DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS. AS WASHINGTON WILL RECALL, OUTCOME THESE CONSULTATIONS WAS PRIORITIES LIST BEGINNING WITH U.S. 30 MILLION DOLLARS WORTH OF ITEMS, INCLUDING RPT INCLUDING TANKS. THIRTY MILLION DOLLAR TRANCHE IN QUESTION, HOWEVER, ALSO ENCOMPASSED OTHER ITEMS DETERMINED EQUALLY IMPORTANT TO EMPIRE'S DEFENSE. WE THINK THE ENTIRE SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, OF WHICH FMS CREDIT WOULD BE INTEGRAL, SHOULD PROVIDE OPTIMUM MIX OF THINGS IEMF NEEDS MOST.

4. AS U.S. PLANNING LIKELY HAVE TO ACCOMMODATE NUMBER OF VARIABLES OVER NEXT THREE YEARS, SUCH AS CONTENT FUTURE SOVIET DELIVERIES TO SOMALIA, POSSIBLE SIGNIFICANT EXPANSION IEG'S DEFENSE BUDGET, ETC., WE THINK IT DESIRABLE IN ANY EVENT NOT TO COMMIT OURSELVES TO SINGLE CATEGORY OF FMS PROCUREMENT IN CONTEXT EVENTUAL THREE-YEAR FMS OFFER.

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